

**Wellesley Public Schools
School Committee Meeting
February 6, 2018
Great Hall, Wellesley Town Hall**

The Open Session of the School Committee convened at 6:33 PM. Those present included School Committee Chair Michael D'Ortenzio Jr., Vice Chair Matt Kelley, Secretary Melissa Martin, and members Sharon Gray and Tony Bent; Superintendent David Lussier and Assistant Superintendent Judy Belliveau.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the acquisition of real estate as well as to invite Superintendent David Lussier, Assistant Superintendent Judy Belliveau, the Board of Selectmen, Executive Director Blythe Robinson, Assistant Executive Director Meghan Jop, and Town Counsel Tom Harrington to join the Committee in said Session. Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. stated that having the discussion in open session would have a detrimental effect on the Committee's negotiating position and that the Committee would reconvene in Open Session following the Executive Session.

MOVED: Mr. Kelley; **SECONDED:** Ms. Gray; **ROLL CALL:** Ms. Gray – Yes, Mr. Kelley – Yes, Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. – Yes, Dr. Bent – Yes, Ms. Martin – Yes. **VOTE to Approve: Yes – 5, No – 0.**

The Committee reconvened in Open Session at 7:27 PM.

OPEN SESSION

JOINT MEETING W/BOARD OF SELECTMEN – HHU

The Committee joined a meeting of the Selectmen to discuss the Hunnewell and MSBA elementary school building projects. Upon a motion made by Marjorie Freiman and seconded by Jack Morgan, the Committee **unanimously VOTED** to elect Ellen Gibbs as Chair of the Joint Meeting. Upon a motion made by Ms. Freiman and seconded by Mr. Morgan, the Committee **unanimously VOTED** to elect Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. as Secretary of the Joint Meeting. In addition to Superintendent David Lussier and Assistant Superintendent Judy Belliveau, the Committee and the Board of Selectmen were joined by Executive Director Blythe Robinson (left at 8:54 PM) and Assistant Executive Director Meghan Jop (left at 8:54 PM).

MSBA Building Project - SBC

Ms. Gray provided background on the HHU project, the status of progress to date, a recap of WPS enrollment, a brief overview of the project scope and next steps. She reaffirmed several points from the HHU position statement voted in May 2017 that the Town should build 2 new schools at present, and a third if and when elementary enrollment exceeds 2,350 students on a trending basis; new school buildings shall have

19 classrooms; and the feasibility study should include a 'proof of concept' phase in order to assist the School Committee in deciding where the new school should be located.

It was noted that the scope of feasibility developed by the School Building Committee and approved by the School Committee, was contained in the RFQ that was prepared and approved in 2017. The RFQ was never put out for bid given the Town's engagement with the MSBA. The RFQ for feasibility will need to be reworked into two separate feasibility documents: one for the MSBA project and one for the Hunnewell project.

The School Committee continues to support the scope of feasibility contained in the original RFQ. Mr. Morgan noted that since the process was put on hold last summer, the Board of Selectmen never actually voted on the RFQ for the initial feasibility study but was inclined to do so.

Mr. Kelley provided an overview of the MSBA process, noting that it is very similar to the process the Town would run even if it were not in partnership with the MSBA. He reviewed the eight phases involved with the MSBA project and discussed the need for two separate SBCs – one for the MSBA project and one for the Hunnewell project. He discussed the feasibility study and its scope, and that Town Meeting approval is required for feasibility and schematic design funding during the MSBA eligibility phase in order to move onto the next phase. It was also noted that although the MSBA project references the 'Upham project', the study is for review of both the Upham and Hardy sites, and potentially other sites, to ensure all options have been considered. The average time from start to completion of an MSBA school building project is five to seven years.

After a discussion and questions relative to the scope of feasibility and timing, upon a motion made by Ms. Freiman and seconded by Mr. Morgan, all Selectmen and Committee members present **VOTED** that the Board of Selectmen and School Committee support making a request to a spring Special Town Meeting to conduct a feasibility study and schematic design for the MSBA project comprised of the Upham and Hardy elementary schools, and that the Board of Selectmen move forward to schedule such a meeting. Dr. Bent had stepped away briefly and was not present for the vote.

HUNNEWELL BUILDING PROJECT

The group then discussed the Hunnewell School process noting that given the MSBA's involvement in the new school project, the Town will need to build Hunnewell on its own. There are two ways to proceed: 1) wait until the completion of the MSBA project to build Hunnewell or 2) decouple the projects and secure external swing space to attempt to build at the same time or overlapping with the MSBA project.

School Committee agrees that it would like to explore the second option in hopes of getting the project completed sooner. This was discussed at the SBC meeting where it

was agreed that the feasibility study for Hunnewell should move forward regardless of when Hunnewell is built. Dr. Lussier expressed his concern with delays in building the schools noting that the deficiencies that currently exist will be exacerbated with delays, and in addition, construction costs will continue to increase.

The group then discussed swing space, the availability of the St. Paul School building, and the approval of a Work Order for SMMA to conduct an assessment of the property to determine if it is feasible as swing space. Work will include abatement of any hazardous materials, making the buildings ADA accessible, including the installation of an elevator, and potentially reconfiguring rooms to accommodate the necessary number of classrooms needed.

There were questions as to whether all Town-owned assets have been considered for renovation prior to considering investing funds into a non-Town owned building. Ms. Gray informed the group that the SBC has considered a number of Town-owned buildings as swing space, none of which are feasible, but urged anyone with suggestions for swing space options to bring them forward.

The group discussed the timing of this funding request with the MSBA project feasibility study funding request, and the impact of these projects on the Town's debt if the projects overlap or are built concurrently. After some discussion, it was agreed that this work should move forward.

Next steps include finalizing the estimate for the cost of feasibility, developing an RFQ for architectural services and for an Owner's Project Manager, and requesting funding from Special Town Meeting for the feasibility study for Hunnewell.

After discussion, upon a motion made by Ms. Freiman and seconded by Mr. Morgan, the Committee ***unanimously VOTED*** that the Board of Selectmen and School Committee support making a request to a spring Special Town Meeting to conduct a feasibility study for the rebuilding or replacement of the Hunnewell Elementary School, and that the Board of Selectmen move forward to schedule such a meeting.

Upon a motion made by Mr. D'Ortenzio Jr. and seconded by Mr. Morgan, the Committee ***unanimously VOTED*** to dissolve the Joint Session.

SC POLICIES

Dr. Bent briefly reviewed the changes made to the policies slated for action. Upon a motion made by Ms. Martin and seconded by Mr. Kelley, the Committee ***unanimously VOTED*** to approve the following policies as presented:

- ACE - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability
- BBBA/BBBB - School Committee Qualifications
- BDD - Superintendent-School Committee Relationship
- BEDH - Public Comment at School Committee Meetings
- KF - Community Use of School Facilities

Dr. Bent and Mr. Kelley then reviewed the policies discussed and revised at a recent Policy Subcommittee meeting.

Dr. Bent noted minor changes made to Policy ***BIBA – School Committee Conferences, Conventions and Workshops***.

Mr. Kelley discussed the revisions to Policy ***ECAF – Security Cameras in Schools***, based on feedback from a resident relative to the policy intent on withholding footage from the public, except when required by law, as well as the intent to protect the identity of individuals appearing in the video footage if the footage must be released.

Ms. Belliveau addressed the changes to Policy ***EF – Food Service Management*** relative to the disposition of the balance in a student's food service account once the student graduates or leaves the District.

Dr. Bent discussed Policy ***JF – Admission of Students to the Wellesley Public Schools*** and recent feedback that was received from a resident regarding the expectation that foreign exchange students attend for a minimum of an academic semester or year. The suggestion was to allow exchanges of shorter durations. The Subcommittee considered this and reached consensus to retain the expectation that exchanges be for a semester or year in duration as it is believed that shorter exchanges are less desirable from an educational viewpoint and potentially more disruptive to the classroom environment. In addition, the Subcommittee agreed to remove ***Appendix B*** from Policy JF which listed the benchmarks for entry to Kindergarten and referring to the District website for the current benchmarks, which may change over time independent of the policy.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion made by Mr. Kelley and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Committee ***unanimously voted*** to adjourn at 9:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Martin
Secretary

Exhibits and Items Used:

MSBA Eligibility Period Schedule of Deliverables

Memo re: HHU discussion for the Joint Session of School Committee and Board of Selectmen

Policy ECAF: Security Cameras in Schools

Policy EF: Food Service Management Policy

Policy JF: Admission of Students to the Wellesley Public Schools